

from the flower bed. According to my colleague at the Passmore Edwards Museum, Dr. Paul Hyman, who was also responsible for the identification, this is an extremely local insect, known previously only from East and West Kent and East Sussex. To my South Essex record can be added a second, which in fact precedes my own by one month, at Bully Fen, Stratford, in the Lea Valley, on 29th August 1984, this record having been made by Dr. Hyman himself. — COLIN W. PLANT, Assistant Curator, Natural Sciences (Biology), Passmore Edwards Museum, Romford Road, Stratford, London, E15 4LZ.

RHODOMETRA SACRARIA L. (LEP., GEOMETRIDAE) TRAVELLING BY SHIP. — On 23 August 1984 I travelled by ship from Iráklion, Crete, north to the island of Thíra, a distance of 68 nautical miles which took about four hours. A live vernal, *Rhodometra sacraria*, spent the journey clinging to the wood-work around a port-hole. I do not know if the moth left the ship at Thíra, and nor do I know if it flew onto the ship in Crete. In August 1984 I several times saw specimens of *R. sacraria* at lights on a villa near Rethimnon in northern Crete, and I assume the moth is a common resident. It would, however, be interesting to hear of other records of this well-known migrant hitching a lift. — DENIS F. OWEN, 66 Scraftoft Lane, Leicester LE5 1HU.

ACHERONTIA ATROPOS L. AND AGRIUS CONVULVULI L. IN SOMERSET. — During September 1984, a total of about 45 larvae and three pupa of *Acherontia atropos* were found at Westbury-sub-Mendip, nr. Wells, Somerset. Between the 3rd and the 8th September about 25 larvae were found by Mr. R. Godier of 'Green Lantern' P. O. Stores, Westbury-sub-Mendip at the following places in and around the village; four at ST 492 493; about a dozen at ST 496 489, two at ST 495 489; three at ST 497 488; four at ST 499 488 and one at ST 495 489. The larvae were all in the last instar and had all gone down for pupation by the 11th. The larvae were found on potato in small potato patches in gardens and allotments. A visit to the village on the 9th, to collect the larvae and to search for more was rewarded by the discovery of two larvae at ST 495 489 and two pupae were dug up at ST 496 488 and also it was heard that a pupating larva had been dug up that morning at ST 492 493. A second visit was made on the 16th to collect yet more larvae; four half-grown *atropos* larvae found on potato in a market gardener's allotment at ST 505 492 on the 11th and also, found at the same place and date, and unidentified hawk moth larva which was preparing to pupate. On seeing the larva, it was easily identified as that of *Agrilus convolvuli*. A quick visit to the site to look for *atropos* and *convolvuli* larva resulted in the discovery of a pupating larva of *convolvuli* in freshly dug earth at the end of a patch of strawberries which had become overgrown by *Convolvulus arvensis*. On the 18th I received news that a pupa of *atropos* had been dug up

that morning at ST 499 489. Between the 25th and 30th October, about a dozen more larvae of *atropos* were found at ST 491 498. A further two *convolvuli* pupae were dug up at ST 505 497 on the 4th October followed by yet another two pupae on the 13th at the same place. A larva of *convolvuli* was also found feeding on bindweed at ST 499 488 on the 28th September. — N. W. LEAR, 178 St. John's Lane, Bedminster, Bristol, Avon BS3 5AR.

CATOPTRIA MARGARITELLA MARGARITELLA D. & S. IN KENT. — J. W. Leech in his book *British Pyralides*, page 78 published in 1886 mentions this mainly northern and western species, as occurring at Deal, Kent. This note was repeated in *The Butterflies and Moths found in the Dover & Deal District*, which the late Bernard Embry and I published in 1949. We were not then aware of any record of this species having been taken there and I still have not heard of any from Kent. However one came to the M.V. trap in my garden on 26th July, 1984. The wind was in the North East and there was a heavy dew, the temperature dropping to a minimum of 47° F. Deal is about 5 miles from here and the area of marshy land in that district must have been considerably reduced since Leech's day by development and by-pass roads. This record, however, seems to confirm Leech's note, although it has taken 98 years to do so! — G. H. YODEN, 18 Castle Avenue, Dover, Kent.

PERIZOMA SAGITTATA F.: MARSH CARPET IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE. — This moth is listed in the Red Data Book of British insects as a Category 2 species, signifying that it is liable to become endangered if factors causing its decline continue. It is therefore pleasing to record its presence in the floodplain of the River Idle in North Nottinghamshire. It was first discovered by Richard Fairclough in 1960 on Misterton Carr as a larva, feeding on the seeds of *Thalictrum flavum* (Common Meadow Rue). It was found in the general area of Misterton by several entomologists in subsequent years and continues to have been reported until at least 1975 when there is a record of 19 larvae. The area around Misterton Carr has been more extensively improved than most areas of the floodplain and a search in 1981 produced no larvae and very few suitable sites for the foodplant.

In 1983 and 1984 an extensive search of the floodplain was made and the insect was discovered in three adjacent parishes; 200 larvae being recorded from one site in 1983, 100 in 1983 and 70 in 1984 from a second, and 9 from a third in 1984. The last figure is almost certainly unrepresentative of the strength of the colony in this site as the date of search was the 30th August, which is much too late. The first site was not searched in 1984.

The long term future of the Nottinghamshire colonies is precarious. Whereas in other parts of the country the larval foodplant grows in open marshland and old grazing meadows, in the River Idle floodplain it occurs almost exclusively on the sides of drainage